

5. COMMUNITY OPINION

The 1987 Plan of Development included a survey of Enfield residents at that time. The 1987 survey found most residents felt that the Town was growing too fast and were dissatisfied with the distribution of land uses at the time. Overwhelming support (93%) was expressed for protecting and acquiring open space, particularly along the Connecticut River and the Scantic River.

There was also substantial majority support for revitalization of Thompsonville and to a lesser degree Hazardville. There was also support for water supply and aquifer protection and for roadway improvements. There was notably little support for local bus service or Amtrak rail service.

In 1997, a new townwide survey was conducted as part of the update process. Highlights of the survey responses are as follows:

- Quality of life in Enfield leads when survey respondents rank nine factors on importance in their decision to move to and live in Enfield, Connecticut. A large number, 94.5%, suggested that quality of life was an important factor.
- The least important factor, among nine, was "housing stock" (47.5% important).
- Clearly, respondents are encouraging town officials and planners to set aside open space for recreation throughout town, along the Connecticut and Scantic rivers and press for open space for agriculture.
- While new construction is not strongly supported, resident respondents encouraged the development of single family homes, a retirement community, and business or corporate offices.
- Respondents overwhelmingly oppose and discourage new prisons and large scale recreation operations such as theme parks.
- Resident respondents provide impressive and strong overall satisfaction ratings for their police (82.9% positive), fire (94.2%), library (88.6%), and emergency medical (82.7%) departments.
- Respondents were only moderately satisfied with their public schools (61.9%), parks and recreation (50.6%), and town government (39.9%).
- There exists mixed satisfaction levels for the public works department. Just over half, 51.1%, provide positive ratings for road and highway work while 81.6% provide high marks for trash collection and recycling efforts.

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- Large majorities of respondents support additional facilities for walking trails and bikeways (83.2%), riverfront recreation (75.7%), playgrounds and picnic areas (70.6%). Just over half (55.6%) support additional swimming facilities. Again, the need for open space recreation is presented to town officials and planners.
- According to resident respondents, the top three guiding principles for growth and development should be:
 - Protecting neighborhoods from too much growth and non-residential uses;
 - Improving traffic circulation and safety; and
 - Enhancing environmental protection.
- Traffic congestion is considered very serious on Elm Street and Hazard Avenue and serious on Enfield Street, Freshwater Boulevard, Palomba Drive, Raffia Road, and St. James. Town planners should attend to these roadways first.
- There exists strong support for senior citizen housing within the Town of Enfield. Town officials and planners should include such housing in the development mix.
- Interestingly, shopping accessibility and location were the top two reasons provided when asked what they liked about living in Enfield.
- And, the top two dislikes are traffic and high taxes.
- The overall theme developed throughout this survey is the need residents feel for more open space, more outdoor passive and active recreation opportunities, better funding for parks and recreation, protection of the integrity of neighborhoods, and efforts to maintain some rural character.

In addition to the mailed survey forms, community meetings were held to obtain information on residents' current concerns and attitudes. Meetings were held in each of the nine neighborhoods shown on the Neighborhoods Map which follows this page.

While each neighborhood has a special emphasis associated with their location, there were many common themes and issues that emerged from these forums. These common themes are listed below and illustrated on the Resident Perception of Issues and Opportunities Map.

EAST LONGMEADOW, MASS.

SHAKER PINES

NORTH
THOMPSONVILLE

THOMPSON-
VILLE
CENTER

HAZARDVILLE

SCITICO

MALL AREA

LOWER
ENFIELD
STREET

TOWN FARM AREA

SOUTHWOOD ACRES

ELLINGTON

EAST WINDSOR

SUFFIELD

CONNECTICUT

LONGMEADOW, MASS.

SOMERS

LEGEND

Neighborhood Boundary

Neighborhoods

Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Enfield, Connecticut

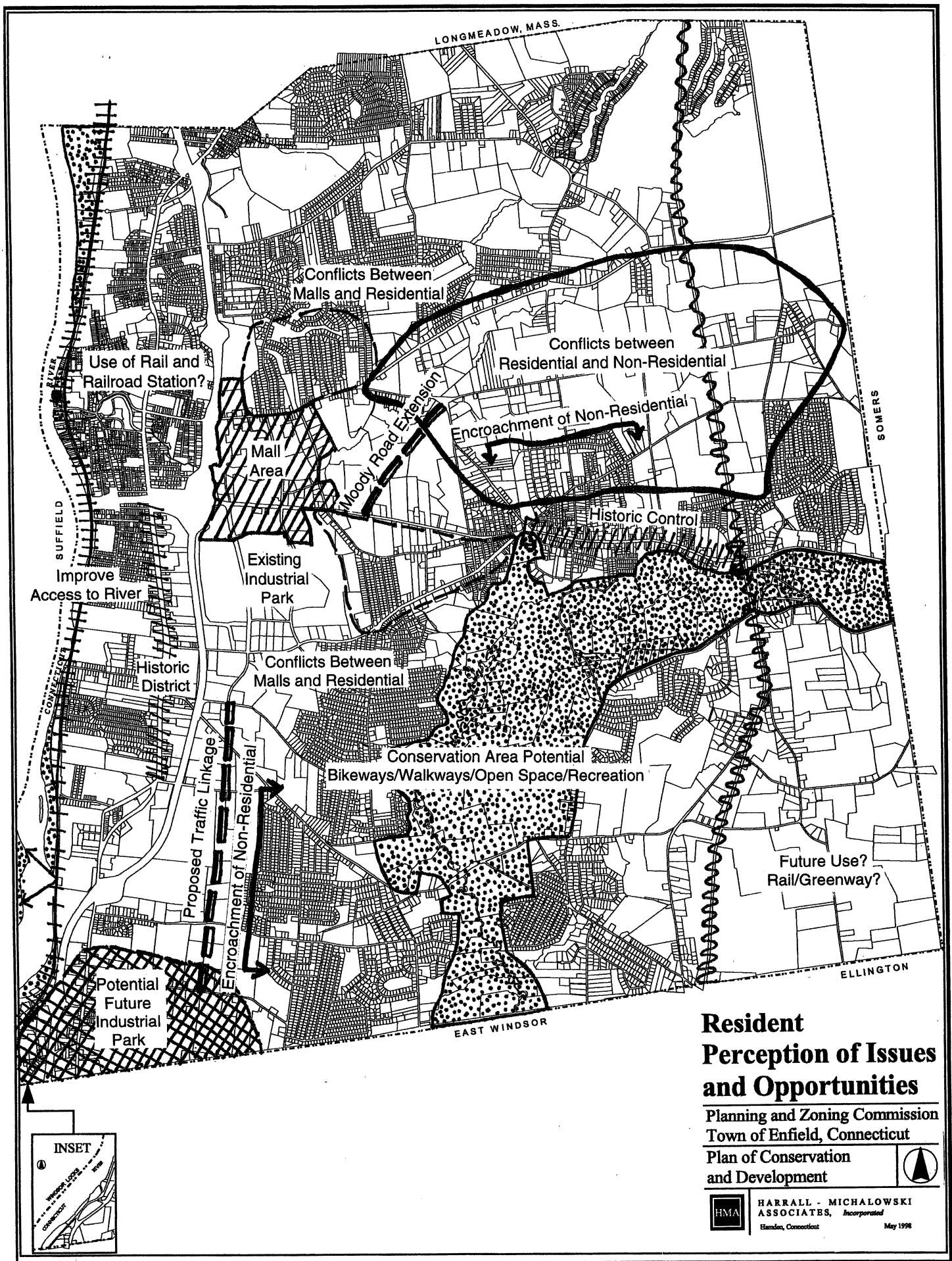
Plan of Conservation
and Development



HARRALL - MICHALOWSKI
ASSOCIATES, Incorporated
Hamden, Connecticut January 1998

SOURCE OF BASE MAP:
TOWN OF ENFIELD TAX MAPS AS DIGITIZED BY
HARRALL - MICHALOWSKI ASSOCIATES, INC.
AND DICESARE - BENTLEY ENGINEERS, INC.

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Resident Perception of Issues and Opportunities

Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Enfield, Connecticut

Plan of Conservation
and Development



HARRALL - MICHALOWSKI
ASSOCIATES, Incorporated
Hamden, Connecticut

May 1996



COMMON THEMES

What I Like Most About My Town: (identified common interests, values, characteristics of the Town - tells what to preserve about the Town.

- * location
- * convenience to shopping, highways, personal services
- * good education system
- * many individuals devoted to the community - civic, recreation, social, institutional events
- * good municipal services - police, fire, ambulances, etc.
- * low crime rate
- * small town feel
- * good elderly services
- * strong youth services
- * historic village areas - Thompsonville, Hazardville and Historic image of Town
- * Connecticut & Scantic rivers
- * open space - farms, etc.

What I Would Like To Change About My Town: (identified areas to work on changing)

- * resolve conflicts between residential neighborhoods and high volume roadways i.e., Routes. 5, 190, and 220
- * retail/commercial saturation
- * better access, facilities along rivers
- * restore/preserve historic areas of Thompsonville, Hazardville
- * mall impacts on adjoining residential areas - i.e., traffic, glare, trucks - limited buffering
- * limited indoor recreation opportunities for pre-teen and young adults
- * traffic congestion
- * lack of public transportation
- * better balance between residential and commercial areas
- * create better or safer system of walking paths and bikeways
- * develop better road and sidewalk maintenance
- * runoff and drainage problems
- * loss of small New England Charm

Land Use Issues

- * new industrial park
- * reuse vacant commercial/industrial property/sites
- * develop recreation opportunities of river - i.e., greenways

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- * continuing care communities
- * retail/residential conflicts
- * zoning/existing land use conflicts
- * loss of rural/open character
- * creation of greenways, walkways, and bikeways
- * creation of alternative north/south local street connections and by-pass around malls
- * preservation of resources - especially waterbodies